

Message Text

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73

ORIGIN SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /031 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/ARN:MHMAUGHAN:AIC

APPROVED BY NEA:ALATHERTON

NEA/ARN:DAKORN

NEA;IRN:CNAAS

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CU:RMCDONALD

S/S-O:GTWOHIE

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O 160103Z AUG 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 179785

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SCUL, PINT, PFOR, IR, LE, US

SUBJECT: LEADER GRANT INVITATION TO IMAM MUSA AS-SADR

REF: BEIRUT 9306

1. DEPARTMENT CONCURS IN YOUR REQUEST TO KEEP INVITATION TO IMAM MUSA AS-SADR FOR FY 75 LEADER GRANT OPEN. FURTHER ACTIONS CONCERNING GRANT PROCEDURES SHOULD BE DIRECTED THROUGH REGULAR CU/IV CHANNELS.

2. FOR TEHRAN. WISH TO ASSURE YOU THAT IN MAKING ABOVE DECISION WE HAVE CAREFULLY AND SYMPATHETICALLY CONSIDERED GOI'S OBJECTIONS TO AS-SADR NOMINATION. HOWEVER, WITHDRAWAL OF INVITATION WOULD CAUSE EMBARRASSMENT AND AS-SADR'S INFLUENCE IN LEBANON IS SUCH THAT GRANT APPEARS TO BE APPROPRIATE.

3. WE, OF COURSE, LEAVE TO YOU WHETHER TO TAKE INITIATIVE

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IN INFORMING GOI OF OUR DECISION OR WAIT UNTIL QUESTION

RAISED WITH YOU. IN EITHER CASE, YOU COULD NOTE THAT IMAM AS-SADR IS CLEARLY BUILDING A POWER BASE FROM WHICH HE CAN BE EXPECTED TO PLAY AN INCREASINGLY PROMINENT AND INFLUENTIAL ROLE IN LOCAL, AND, PERHAPS REGIONAL, AFFAIRS. DESPITE INFLAMMATORY PUBLIC RHETORIC AND HIS CONTACTS WITH RADICAL GROUPS, WHICH HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO HIS ESTRANGEMENT FROM IRAN, WE BELIEVE THAT IMAM REMAINS POTENTIALLY AMEN-

ABLE TO MORE MODERATE INFLUENCES. INTERNALLY, SUCH INFLUENCES WILL DEPEND ON ACTIONS OF GOL VIS A VIS THE SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC NEEDS OF THE SHI'A COMMUNITY WHICH FORM THE CRUX OF THE IMAM'S PUBLIC DEMANDS. WE ALSO FEEL THAT A PROGRAMMED VISIT TO THE U.S. SUCH AS THAT OFFERED UNDER IV LEADER GRANT COULD BE USEFUL IN GIVING THE IMAM A MORE BALANCED PERSPECTIVE ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS THAN THAT NOW AVAILABLE TO HIM FROM HIS IRAQ AND SYRIAN CONTACTS. THIS DEVELOPMENT WOULD VERY MUCH BE IN OUR MUTUAL INTERESTS. WE NOTE THAT GOL HAS CONCURRED IN OUR KEEPING INVITATION TO IMAM SADR OPEN. KISSINGER

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